RYAN P. HUGHES

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Professional Summary

Ryan Hughes is a senior public relations and strategic communications professional with over 15 years of experience leading account teams in delivering media relations, corporate and executive communications, crisis and litigation communications, issue advocacy, public affairs, and reputation management programs. Throughout his career, agency leadership and the clients he's worked with have expressed their appreciation for his ability to quickly familiarize himself with the intricacies of their unique industries and issues and to lead the development and execution of actionable communications strategies that advance their strategic objectives.

While serving in positions of leadership at prominent public relations and strategic communications firms, Hughes has led account teams in developing and executing strategic communications for clients from a diverse cross-section of industries and issue areas, including public affairs, policy and political campaigns, philanthropy, entertainment and media, healthcare and pharmaceuticals, national security and defense, blockchain and cryptocurrency, financial services and fintech, technology and artificial intelligence, manufacturing, corporate and professional services, nonprofits, and education.

Hughes's approach to strategic communications has been shaped in large part by a strong foundation in public affairs and political communications. During his time in Washington, D.C., he managed high-level strategic communications and media relations for clients in both the private and public sectors, including government entities, issue advocacy organizations, and political campaigns, focusing in particular on how best to communicate their priorities to the policymakers most relevant to their issues and objectives. That work included playing a pivotal role in handling conservative media relations for Governor Scott Walker's presidential campaign and later managing key aspects of the surrogate booking operation for Governor John Kasich's presidential campaign.

Hughes previously served in state government as External Relations Coordinator for Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker (R-WI) and as Assistant to Illinois State Treasurer Dan Rutherford (R-IL).

Work History

Partner & Head of U.S. Operations 04/2025 – Present
Maltin PR – Chicago, IL

- Lead the U.S. expansion of London-based litigation communications consultancy Maltin PR, establishing the firm's American market presence through strategic positioning, relationship development, thought leadership, and targeted business development initiatives.
- Provide senior-level strategic counsel to law firms, corporations, executives, and high-profile individuals facing complex litigation, crisis, and reputational challenges, developing communications strategies that support broader legal and business objectives.
- Direct U.S.-focused communications strategy for sensitive cross-border matters, navigating differing legal, regulatory, reputational, and media environments in coordination with attorneys, executives, international colleagues, and other stakeholders.
- Develop and execute sophisticated media strategies around sensitive matters, identifying and engaging appropriate journalists, shaping public narratives, and deploying information strategically to advance clients' legal, reputational, and stakeholder objectives.

Account Director, Global Reputation Risk + Public Affairs 10/2023 – 04/2025
Allison Worldwide – Chicago, IL

- Led development and execution of strategic communications plans for global clients, directly impacting achievement of business objectives.
- Drove earned media strategy and secured high-value coverage across national and industry media.
- Built and maintained strategic relationships with key journalists, editors, and producers.
- Provided senior-level counsel on crisis communications and reputation management.

Freelance Public Relations Consultant, Public Relations & Strategic Communications 04/2022 – 10/2023
Freelance – Chicago, IL

- Delivered strategic communications counsel and execution for a diverse client portfolio.
- Secured targeted media placements aligned with clients' business objectives.
- Provided crisis communications support and reputation management services.
- Developed and implemented customized PR strategies across multiple industries.

Senior Manager, Public Relations & Strategic Communications 01/2021 – 04/2022
Hiltzik Strategies – New York, NY

- Led PR and communications strategy for high-profile clients including former Google CEO Eric Schmidt and TV personality Dr. Phil.
- Spearheaded litigation communications for successful defense in $66B "Bitcoin Trial of the Century" (Kleiman v Wright).
- Managed multi-disciplinary account teams in executing strategic communications campaigns.
- Oversaw reputation management programs across technology, finance, entertainment, and nonprofit sectors, among others.

Senior Account Manager, Public Relations & Strategic Communications 05/2016 – 01/2021
ROKK Solutions – Washington, DC

- Oversaw high-level public affairs, advocacy, strategic communications and media relations campaigns for private- and public-sector clients, with a particular focus on influencing policymakers in Washington.
- Provided international media relations and public affairs support to The White House during Advisor Jared Kushner's 2019 Peace to Prosperity economic workshop in Manama, Bahrain, emphasizing the administration's economic proposals for Middle East peace.
- Elevated the executive visibility of high-ranking military and national security officials affiliated with an Israel-aligned national security think tank through national broadcast interviews, thought leadership op-ed placements, and tier-one media introductions.
- Led litigation communications support efforts for the 9/11 Families suing for justice against international state sponsors of terrorism.
- Executed a strategic communications plan for Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rosselló in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria that reversed financial mismanagement narratives, secured $15.8B in emergency relief funds, and attracted an influx of new business investments.

Account Executive, Public Relations & Strategic Communications 09/2014 – 05/2016
Shirley & Banister Public Affairs – Alexandria, VA

- Oversaw public relations and strategic communications for multiple high-profile politically right-of-center accounts, including public figures, issue advocacy organizations, and political campaigns.
- Won the firm's new-business engagement with then-Republican frontrunner Gov. Scott Walker's presidential campaign and managed the campaign's conservative media relationships.
- Directed all aspects of the surrogate media booking operation for Gov. John Kasich's (R-OH) presidential campaign.
- Developed and executed strategic communications plans unique to each client that helped achieve their various strategic objectives.

Assistant to the State Treasurer 06/2013 – 09/2014
Office of Illinois State Treasurer Dan Rutherford – Chicago, IL

- Served as personal aide and project coordinator during statewide gubernatorial campaign.
- Managed complex executive calendar and advance preparation for key events.
- Drafted press releases, op-eds, and social media content for statewide constituency engagement.
- Interfaced with elected officials, business leaders, and media on Treasurer's behalf.
- Managed executive communications on behalf of the Treasurer, including drafting press releases, local thought leadership op-eds, and social media posts corresponding with visits to constituencies statewide.

External Relations Coordinator 09/2012 – 06/2013
Office of Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker – Madison, WI

- Traveled statewide to advance events prior to the Governor's arrival to set up events and confirm event logistics.
- Cooperated with leaders of counties, municipalities, businesses, and nonprofits to establish relationships on behalf of the Governor.
- Worked with Wisconsin State Patrol and local police units to establish security for the Governor's participation in events.
- Constructed events in ways that sent the Governor's intended message to the media.
- Briefed the Governor on event logistics, key dignitaries, and agenda for public appearances.

Early Public Affairs Experience

Director of Public Relations 05/2012 – 06/2013
UW-Madison College Republicans – Madison, WI

Press Office 05/2012 – 09/2012
Republican National Committee – Washington, DC

Administration & Scheduling Intern 09/2011 – 01/2012
Office of Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker – Madison, WI

Scheduling and Community Affairs Intern 05/2011 – 09/2011
Office of Illinois State Treasurer Dan Rutherford – Chicago, IL

Education

Indiana University – Political Science 05/2022 – 09/2024

University of Wisconsin-Madison – Political Science 09/2010 – 06/2013

Skills

Public Relations, Strategic Communications, Crisis Communications, Social Media Management, Brand Positioning, Corporate Communications, Public Affairs, Thought Leadership, Reputation Management, Executive Communications, Strategic Management, Media Relations, Litigation Communications, Policy Communications, Internal Communications, External Communications, Executive Visibility, Consumer Public Relations, Account Management, Client Services, Project Management, Team Leadership, Coordinating, Organization, Delegation, Training and Development, Performance Improvement, Strategic Planning, Time Management, Change Management, People Management, Supervision, Brand Marketing, Issues Management, Investor Relations, Stakeholder Engagement, Editorial Calendars, Writing, Press Releases, Relationship Building, Spokesperson, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft PowerPoint, Cision, PR Newswire, Muck Rack, Sony Vegas, LexisNexis, TVEyes, Earned Media, Audience Targeting, Media Planning, Integrated Marketing, Paid Media